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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 KINSHASA 000451

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SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR'S MEETING WITH SOUTH KIVU GOVERNOR

Classified By: Ambassador William J. Garvelink for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) Summary: During a recent conversation with ambassador, South Kivu Governor Louis Muherhwa said he had stressed to senior GDRC officials the need to coordinate upcoming Kimia II military operations with the provincial government. Muherhwa noted that, although integration had generally been successful, there were still technical issues to address. The Mai Mai phenomenon, in Muherhwa's view, was fundamentally an economic issue; give them jobs, and most, if not all, would demobilize. Muherhwa maintained that MONUC "was not doing enough," either to protect civilians or to anticipate humanitarian needs. DRC-Rwandan cooperation during Operation Umoja Wetu had been instrumental in breaking down mutual mistrust, as well as in energizing all efforts against a common enemy, the FDLR. Muherhwa pleaded for a faster and deeper decentralization process in the DRC, but he strongly implied that many in the central government were reluctant to cede power to the provinces. End summary.

South Kivu Concerned with Possible Kimia II Consequences

¶2. (C) South Kivu Governor Louis Muherhwa recently met with Ambassador, DCM, and PolCouns to discuss the security situation in his province, as well as to present his views on tensions between Kinshasa and provincial governments regarding the decentralization process. Muherhwa noted that he had come to Kinshasa to meet Minister of International and Regional Cooperation Raymond Tshibanda to underscore the need to coordinate upcoming Kimia II military operations with provincial authorities. Muherhwa said he was particularly focused on trying to minimize human rights and humanitarian problems that might arise from renewed conflict.

More Work to Do on Integration

¶3. (C) On the integration of former combatants in the Kivus, Muherhwa noted that it had basically been a political success, but that more work now needed to be done on the technical side to solidify the haphazard accelerated integration process. CNDP units had primarily integrated in a "homogeneous" fashion, i.e., they had remained intact within the FARDC. Non-payment of FARDC salaries remained a critical concern, according to Muherhwa.

¶4. (C) Turning to the Mai Mai, Muherhwa characterized these groups' demands as essentially economic in nature. The Mai Mai were a consequence of high unemployment and poverty in the province. Mai Mai groups, in Muherhwa's words, discovered that "with guns, they were able to feed themselves and their families." Muherhwa commented that, in general, the Mai Mai remained hostile towards Rwanda and in favor of integration into the FARDC. However, Muherhwa implied that

this was not always the case, with certain Mai Mai elements deviating from these views.

MONUC Should Do More

¶5. (C) Muherhwa criticized MONUC for "not wanting to do more" in support of FARDC operations in the Kivus. MONUC, in Muherhwa's opinion, has not adequately defined its role and tactics. Even MONUC's much discussed civilian protection mandate was "vague," Muherhwa opined. For example, Muherhwa maintained that MONUC should do more contingency planning to anticipate IDP flows and to possibly create humanitarian corridors in response to Kimia II operations (Comment: MONUC is undoubtedly planning how to respond to any humanitarian consequences or renewed fighting. However, this process is a two-way street: MONUC has consistently complained about the FARDC's unwillingness to keep MONUC in the loop regarding its military operations, thus diminishing MONUC's ability to respond effectively to civilian protection concerns. End comment).

DRC-Rwandan Relations

¶6. (C) Regarding Operation Umoja Wetu, Muherhwa said Rwanda's involvement had been important for two reasons. First, on a psychological level both governments overcame the mutual mistrust they had harbored towards each other. Secondly, the joint military operation had re-focused all the energy on a common enemy, the FDLR. Tactically, the

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operation had been a success. However, politically, there was still much work to do in the Kivus and on improving DRC-Rwandan relations. On the regional economic front, Muherhwa advocated for more cooperation on the local level, e.g., South Kivu with neighboring Rwandan and Burundian provinces. A revitalized Economic Community of the Great Lakes States (CEPGL) could also prove useful. Muherhwa candidly acknowledged that the GDRC could learn from Rwanda's relatively more liberalized trade regime.

Deeper and Faster Decentralization

¶7. (C) Muherhwa highlighted decentralization as a crucial issue for the development of DRC society. Muherhwa maintained that, in theory, everyone (central and provincial governments) supported decentralization. However, in practice, there was tension between Kinshasa and the provincial capitals. Muherhwa said that he recently advised President Kabila to "decentralize the GDRC's five development priorities (Cinq Chantiers)." The central government zealously tried to prevent any interaction between international donors and provincial governments, a mistaken approach in Muherhwa's opinion.

Priorities: Security and Improving Public Administration

¶8. (C) In conclusion, Muherhwa said the two biggest challenges facing South Kivu were restoring security and trying to create a better functioning public administration. Muherhwa pleaded for intensified international pressure on the FDLR, particularly on diaspora funding the group. Stopping outside financing of the FDLR would be an enormous step towards ridding the region of the militia. Under public administration, Muherhwa listed a wide range of issues that needed attention: general restoration of state authority, as well as improvements in the justice, police, and customs sectors.

¶9. (C) Comment: Perhaps Muherhwa's most interesting comments centered on the decentralization process, and his implication that Kinshasa was unwilling to commit to a full

decentralization that would give more political and economic power to the provinces. He makes a strong case for intensified provincial and local commercial interaction across national borders. In fact, most of Eastern DRC is already informally much more commercially oriented towards East Africa, rather than towards Kinshasa. Muherhwa's criticism of MONUC seemed somewhat simplistic, and as if he were already looking for scapegoats for any possible failure of Kimia II. This is not surprising, however, since MONUC is a convenient target when blaming others for the DRC's own mistakes in the Kivus. End comment.

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